

HEALTH

Thyroid Health

The thyroid is a small gland inside your neck, located in front of your breathing airway (trachea) and below your Adam's apple. The thyroid hormones control your metabolism (your body's ability to break down food, store it in energy form and your ability to break down food into waste products with a release of energy in the process.) The thyroid produces two hormones, T3 (called tri-iodothyronine) and T4 (thyroxine). The pituitary gland in the brain produces the thyroid-stimulating hormone, which activates the thyroid to produce more thyroid hormones.

Types of Thyroid Disorders

1. Hyperthyroidism: An overactive thyroid gland.

Too much thyroid hormone speeds up your body's metabolism. Women get this condition more often than men, and it occurs in about 1% of women. One of the most frequent forms of hyperthyroidism is known as Graves' disease and it can run in families. Some symptoms are weakness in your muscles, trembling hands, rapid heartbeat, irritability and anxiety.

2. Hypothyroidism: An underactive thyroid gland.

Several causes for this condition exist, including the thyroid's inability to make enough hormone, conditions in the brain that fail to produce thyroid stimulating hormone and the lack of stimulate of the thyroid to make hormone. Some symptoms include becoming sluggish and tiring easily, gaining weight more easily, having less perspiration, slower digestion and constipation

3. Thyroid nodules: A condition that begins as swelling in the thyroid gland.

This swelling can be because of thyroid cell growth or because of fluid collecting. About half of people have these nodules, but many are not aware of them until they become large. These nodules need medical attention because they may be cancer growths, a sign of hyperthyroidism or become too large and press on your trachea and esophagus.

Visit www.hormone.org to learn more about thyroid illnesses and other hormone related conditions.



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